## Ashmore









## Ashmore Group plc

Results for six months ending 31 December 2020

10 February 2021

#### Overview



#### Financial performance reflects early stages of a typical recovery cycle

- AuM +11% over the six months to US\$93.0bn, driven by investment performance
- Lower average AuM YoY (-6%) reflecting stage in the recovery cycle
- Adjusted EBITDA -12% YoY in line with revenue, margin maintained at 68%
- Strong seed capital returns delivered PBT growth of 14% to £150.6 million

#### Significant outperformance delivered

- Improving one, three and five year performance across the Group
- Post-crisis recovery cycle in progress as usual, potential for further alpha

#### Strategy continues to deliver diversification

- Equities AuM +41% to US\$6.5 billion
- IG universe continues to grow, institutional demand and mutual fund products launched
- Dedicated ESG funds developing performance track records
- Local asset management platforms growing rapidly, AuM +39% over the six months

#### Outlook continues to favour Emerging Markets

- Vaccination programmes critical to worldwide recovery in 2021
- After short-term support of DM stimulus wears off, capital will seek higher growth and returns elsewhere
- Economic growth forecasts and relative valuations favour EM over DM

## Continued strategic focus



#### Operating model performing well

- Investment processes delivering alpha
- Robust and flexible business model has adapted to environment

#### Equities momentum continues

- AuM +41% since June to US\$6.5 billion
- All Cap achieved three-year track record

#### Growth in IG opportunity

- IG bonds represent >50% of external and corporate debt indices
- Ashmore delivering good performance and institutional demand increasing: lower volatility, strong macroeconomic fundamentals, higher yields vs DM bonds, no defaults

#### Comprehensive approach to sustainability

- ESG factors integrated into fixed income & equities processes
- Broad range of dedicated ESG funds launched
- Ashmore Foundation grants to projects to offset Group's emissions

#### Local markets achieving scale

 Diversified network of scalable platforms delivering strong AuM growth (+39% over 6m, +19% in 2020)

#### **Global Emerging Markets equity strategies**

Three years	Active	All Cap	Small Cap
Benchmark (%)	+6.2%	+6.2%	+2.7%
Alpha (%)	+2.4%	+7.1%	+7.6%

Composite gross returns, annualised

#### **Investment Grade performance**

Three years	Sovereign	Corporate
Benchmark (%)	+7.4%	+6.3%
Alpha (%)	+0.7%	+1.6%

SICAV gross returns, annualised for periods greater than one year

#### **Developing dedicated ESG fund track records**

	Blended debt	Equity
Inception date	Feb 2019	Mar 2020
Benchmark (%)	+6.4%	+57.9%
Alpha (%)	+1.2%	+25.9%

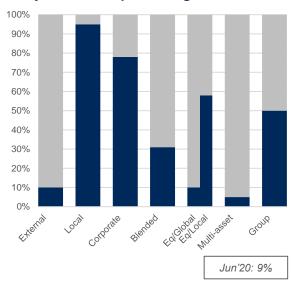
SICAV gross returns, annualised for periods greater than one year

## Diversifying AuM and revenues

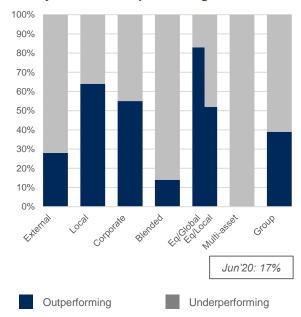
## Investment performance



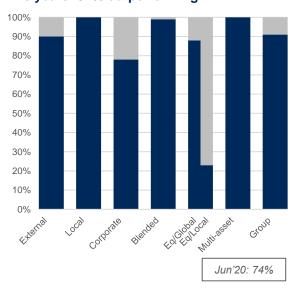




Three years: 39% outperforming



Five years: 91% outperforming



- Investment processes delivering significant outperformance as markets recover
- · 97% of AuM outperforming over the six month period

## Outperformance through market recovery cycles

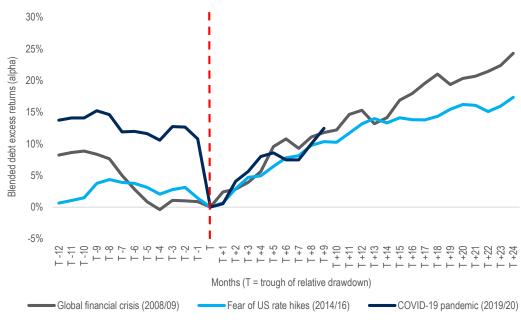


- Relative performance lags during market drawdown
  - active management underpins future returns
- Initial recovery phase:
  - high market beta as oversold assets reprice
- Extended recovery period
  - economic conditions improve, asset prices trend to normal levels

#### Where are we in the current cycle?

- First phase largely complete, Ashmore has delivered substantial alpha across all strategies
- Second phase has potential for further outperformance over a longer period
- COVID-19 developments, as well as usual macro risks, will influence shape of market recovery

## Blended debt: extended period of outperformance after market drawdowns



Blended debt alpha	Drawdown period	T+9m	T+12m	T+24m
COVID-19	-8.7%	+12.4%	?	?
US rate hikes	-3.9%	+10.3%	+13.1%	+17.4%
GFC	-7.3%	+11.8%	+15.3%	+24.3%

Potential for extended period of outperformance

## Financial performance overview



#### AuM +11% over six months

 Net flows -US\$1.4 billion and positive investment performance +US\$10.8 billion

#### Adjusted net revenue -12%

- Average AuM -6% YoY
- Lower net management fees

#### Operating costs reduced by 9%

- Maintained diligent focus on costs

#### Adjusted EBITDA -12%

- High operating margin maintained at 68%

#### Profit before tax +14%

Strong investment performance delivered seed capital gains

#### Diluted EPS +15%

Lower effective tax rate

	H1 2020/21 £m	H1 2019/20 £m	YoY %
AuM (US\$bn)	93.0	98.4	(5)
Adjusted net revenue	156.8	177.3	(12)
Adjusted operating costs	(51.2)	(56.5)	9
Adjusted EBITDA	107.2	122.5	(12)
- margin	68%	69%	
Seed capital	49.3	8.4	nm
Profit before tax	150.6	132.4	14
Diluted EPS (p)	18.2	15.8	15
DPS (p)	4.80	4.80	-

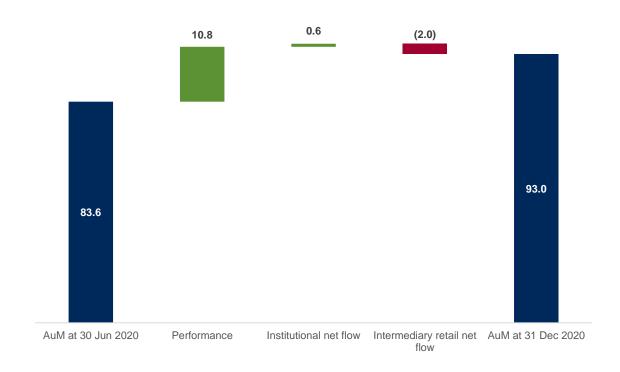
Figures stated on an adjusted basis exclude FX translation and seed capital-related items; see Appendix 1

## Assets under management



- Strong investment performance +US\$10.8 billion
- Gross subscriptions of US\$7.5 billion, 9% of opening AuM (H1 2019/20: US\$14.9 billion, 16%)
  - Effective distribution model: higher allocations by existing institutional clients & new mandates in equities, external debt & blended debt
- Gross redemptions of US\$8.9 billion, 11% of opening AuM (H1 2019/20: US\$9.2 billion, 10%)
  - Allocation decisions in blended debt & local currency
  - Corporate debt & local currency mutual fund outflows
- Net flows -US\$1.4bn
  - Institutional net inflow offset by intermediary retail outflows
  - Net inflows in equities, external debt and overlay / liquidity

#### AuM development (US\$bn)



Investment performance drives AuM growth during initial recovery phase

## Local Emerging Markets businesses delivering strong growth



- Ashmore's strategy seeks to mobilise Emerging Markets capital, providing a significant growth opportunity as:
  - economies and capital markets grow
  - independent asset management industries develop
  - investors require more complex products
- Local platforms provide strategic benefits:
  - diversify Ashmore's revenues and profits
  - provide access to broader client base
  - increasing profitability as AuM grows
- In aggregate, H1 AuM +39% over the 6m, +19% YoY, to ~US\$7bn
- Ashmore Indonesia AuM +20% since IPO, now managing close to US\$3bn
- Colombia, India and Saudi Arabia also managing ≥US\$1bn

#### **Local platforms: contribution to Group**

	Group	Local	vs Group
AuM (US\$bn)	93.0	6.9	7%
Average net management fee margin (bps)	42	70	+67%
Employees*	295	99	34%
H1 adjusted EBITDA	107.2	~£6m	6%
Adjusted EBITDA margin	68%	47%	-31%

<sup>\*</sup> Excludes 14 Ashmore Avenida project management employees



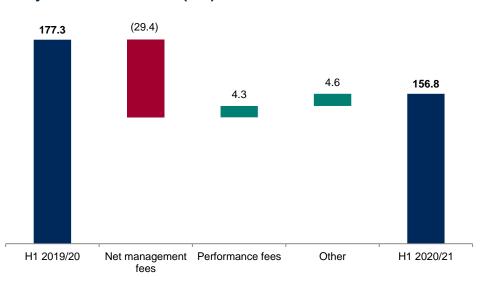
Local platforms growing rapidly and achieving scale

# Financial results Revenues

**Ashmore** 

- Net management fees -17%
  - Average AuM -6% YoY, reflecting decline in early 2020
  - Higher average GBP:USD rate (-3%)
- Net management fee margin 42bps
  - -4bps YoY, primarily due to mutual fund flows (-1.5bps), investment theme mix (-1bp) and large mandate flows (-1bp)
- Performance fees reflect strong relative investment performance during Q2
- FX hedging gains with higher GBP:USD rate

#### Adjusted net revenue (£m)



	H1 2020/21 £m	H1 2019/20 £m	YoY %
Net management fees	138.9	168.3	(17)
Performance fees	7.7	3.4	127
Other revenue	1.5	2.5	(40)
FX: hedges	8.7	3.1	181
Adjusted net revenue	156.8	177.3	(12)

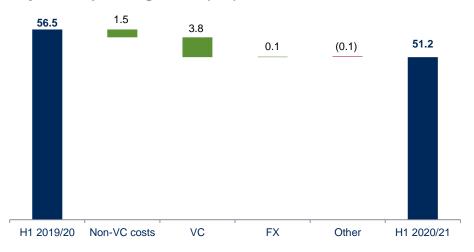
Figures stated on an adjusted basis, excluding FX translation and seed capital-related items; see Appendix 1

# Financial results Operating costs

**Ashmore** 

- · Adjusted operating costs reduced by 9% YoY
- Non-VC operating costs fell by 6%
  - Continued disciplined control of all operating costs
  - Average headcount stable YoY
  - Ongoing restrictions mean no travel and remote working for most employees
- VC accrual at 20%

#### Adjusted operating costs (£m)



	H1 2020/21 £m	H1 2019/20 £m	YoY %
Fixed staff costs	(13.6)	(13.6)	-
Other operating costs	(9.6)	(11.0)	13
Depreciation & amortisation	(1.6)	(1.7)	6
Operating costs before VC	(24.8)	(26.3)	6
Variable compensation (20%)	(25.2)	(30.1)	16
- adjustment for FX translation	(1.2)	(0.1)	nm
Adjusted operating costs	(51.2)	(56.5)	9

VC = variable compensation Figures stated on an adjusted basis, excluding FX translation and seed capital-related items; see Appendix 1

## Financial results Seed capital

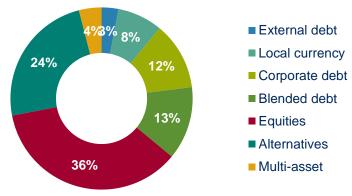
- Active programme delivered strong investment performance and successful realisations
  - P&L gain of £49.3 million (H1 2019/20: £8.4 million gain)
  - predominantly in equities and alternatives themes
- New investments of £68.0 million to support diversified AuM growth
  - investment grade corporate debt
  - distribution focus: Latin America and equities
- Successful realisations of £79.9 million
  - client flows into equity funds
  - return of capital by alternatives funds
- Total seed capital programme of ~£265 million
  - market value £254.6 million (30 June 2020: £234.8 million)
  - undrawn commitments of £10.1 million
- Seed capital has supported funds representing ~10% of Group AuM (~US\$9 billion)



#### Seed capital movement (£m)



#### Diversified across themes (% of market value)



Strong performance and successful recycling

# Financial results Statutory earnings



	H1 2020/21 £m	H1 2019/20 £m	YoY %
Profit before tax	150.6	132.4	14
Tax	(22.1)	(18.2)	(21)
Profit after tax	128.5	114.2	13
Profit attributable to non-controlling interests	(0.8)	(1.3)	38
Profit attributable to equity holders of the parent	127.7	112.9	13
Earnings per share: basic (p)	19.4	16.9	15
Earnings per share: diluted (p)	18.2	15.8	15
Dividends per share (p)	4.80	4.80	-

- Effective tax rate 14.7% vs 19.0% statutory UK rate
- Effect of non-operating items on diluted EPS: FX translation -0.6p (H1 2019/20: nil), seed capital +6.0p (H1 2019/20: +1.1p)
  - Giving lower adjusted diluted EPS of 12.8p (H1 2019/20: 14.7p)

# Financial results Cash flow

Ashmore

- Operations generated cash flow of £89.2 million (1)
  - 83% of adjusted EBITDA (H1 2019/20: 94%)
- · Consistent uses of operating cash flow:
  - Corporation tax
  - Ordinary dividends to shareholders
  - Share purchases to satisfy employee equity awards, avoids dilution
- Active management of seed capital generated cash of £35.9 million
- Mark-to-market impact of GBP strength on closing cash balances

#### Cash flow (£m) (1)

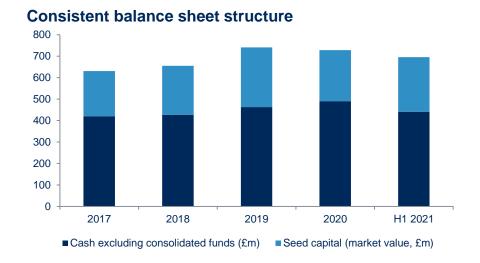


(1) Excludes consolidated funds. See Appendix for reconciliation to statutory consolidated cash flow statement

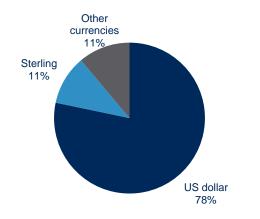
# Financial results Balance sheet

**Ashmore** 

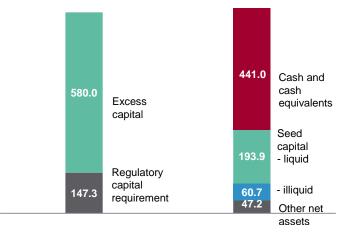
- Capital resources of £727.3 million (1)
  - Excess regulatory capital of £580.0 million, equivalent to 81p/share
  - No debt
- Balance sheet remains highly liquid (85%)
  - £441.0 million cash & cash equivalents (2)
  - £254.6 million seed capital, with 75% of funds with at least monthly dealing frequency
- FX exposure is predominantly USD
  - £4.0 million PBT sensitivity to 5c move in GBP:USD



#### FX exposure: cash<sup>(2)</sup> & seed capital



#### Capital resources of £727.3 million (1)



#### Robust balance sheet structure

<sup>(1)</sup> Total equity less deductions for intangibles, goodwill, DAC, material holdings and interim ordinary dividend

<sup>(2)</sup> Excludes consolidated funds. See Appendix for reconciliation to statutory consolidated cash flow statement

## **Emerging Markets outlook**



- COVID vaccination programmes critical to further worldwide economic & social progress in 2021
- Extraordinary stimulus by DM governments/central banks
  - underpinned by US election result
  - supportive for markets in near term
  - but medium term impact on growth and potentially leads to currency devaluation, especially US dollar
- EM countries have lower debt/GDP and higher real interest rates, so fiscal & monetary stimulus is manageable
- EM growth premium is intact and fixed income and equity markets offer highly attractive valuations relative to DM
- Macro backdrop is therefore supportive of capital flows to EM as investors seek higher growth and investment returns
- Ashmore is well-positioned to benefit from EM's long-term growth trends

# 8.0 6.0 4.0 2.0 (2.0) (4.0) (6.0) 2018 2019 2020f 2021f 2022f 2023f 2024f 2025f

Emerging Markets

■ Developed Markets

Source: IMF, Ashmore

## Summary



- Financial performance reflects early stage of recovery in markets
- Significant investment outperformance over the period
- · Strategy continues to deliver diversification
- Investors seeking higher growth and returns will favour EM over DM

# **Ashmore**

Q&A

# **Ashmore**

## Appendices



# Appendix 1a Adjusted profits reconciliation

	Adjusted H1 2020/21 £m	Adjusted H1 2019/20 £m	YoY %
Net revenue	150.7	176.8	(15)
FX translation	6.1	0.5	nm
Adjusted net revenue	156.8	177.3	(12)
Operating costs ex consolidated funds	(48.4)	(54.7)	12
VC on FX translation	(1.2)	(0.1)	nm
Adjusted operating costs excluding depreciation & amortisation	(49.6)	(54.8)	9
Adjusted EBITDA	107.2	122.5	(12)
EBITDA margin	68%	69%	
Depreciation and amortisation	(1.6)	(1.7)	6
Total adjusted operating costs	(51.2)	(56.5)	9
Net finance income	0.5	3.7	nm
Associates and joint ventures	0.1	(0.1)	nm
Seed capital-related items	49.3	8.4	nm
Foreign exchange translation net of VC	(4.9)	(0.4)	nm
Profit before tax	150.6	132.4	14

## Appendix 1b Seed capital



- Consolidated funds:
  - Line-by-line consolidation in financial statements
  - FX taken to reserves
  - PBT contribution of +£30.9 million
- · Unconsolidated funds:
  - Market returns including FX recognised in Finance income
  - PBT contribution of +£18.4 million

	H1 2020/21 £m	H1 2019/20 £m
Gains/(losses) on investment securities	55.9	4.2
Change in third-party interests in consolidated funds	(25.7)	(0.5)
Operating costs	(0.8)	(1.1)
Interest and dividend income	1.5	2.0
Sub-total: consolidated funds	30.9	4.6
Finance income		
- market return	20.8	0.6
- foreign exchange	(2.4)	3.2
Sub-total: unconsolidated funds	18.4	3.8
Total profit/(loss)	49.3	8.4
- realised	3.3	1.5
- unrealised	46.0	6.9
Seed capital included in Finance income	19.9	5.8
Interest income	0.5	3.7
Reported Finance income	20.4	9.5



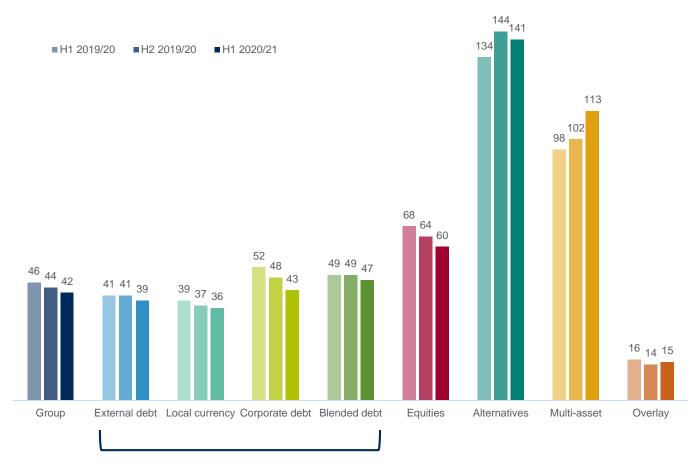
# Appendix 2a Net management and performance fees by theme

	H1 2020/21 £m	H1 2019/20 £m	H1 2020/21 US\$m	H1 2019/20 US\$m
External debt	27.1	31.8	35.8	40.2
Local currency	26.5	31.6	35.0	40.0
Corporate debt	18.1	29.9	23.9	37.7
Blended debt	42.6	49.1	56.3	61.8
Equities	12.1	12.4	16.0	15.7
Alternatives	6.9	7.6	9.1	9.7
Multi-asset	1.2	1.7	1.6	2.1
Overlay / liquidity	4.4	4.2	5.8	5.3
Total net management fee income	138.9	168.3	183.6	212.5

	H1 2020/21 £m	H1 2019/20 £m	H1 2020/21 US\$m	H1 2019/20 US\$m
External debt	-	2.4	-	3.0
Local currency	-	-	-	-
Corporate debt	4.2	0.1	5.8	0.1
Blended debt	0.2	0.9	0.3	1.2
Equities	-	-	-	-
Alternatives	3.3	-	4.5	-
Multi-asset	-	-	-	-
Overlay / liquidity	-	-	-	-
Total performance fee income	7.7	3.4	10.6	4.3

## Appendix 2b Management fee margins





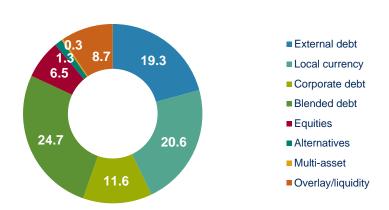
Fixed income: 41bps

(H1 2019/20: 45bps) (H2 2019/20: 43bps)

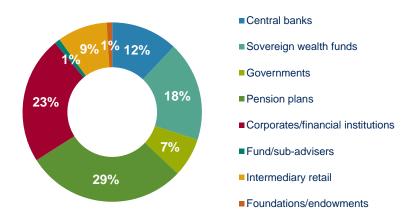
# Appendix 3a Assets under management



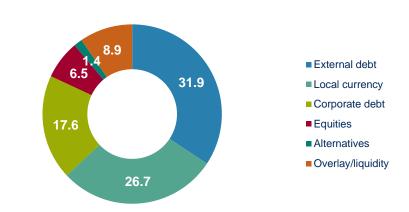
#### AuM by theme (US\$bn)



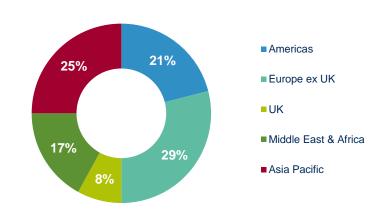
#### AuM by client type



#### AuM as invested (US\$bn)



#### **AuM** by client location



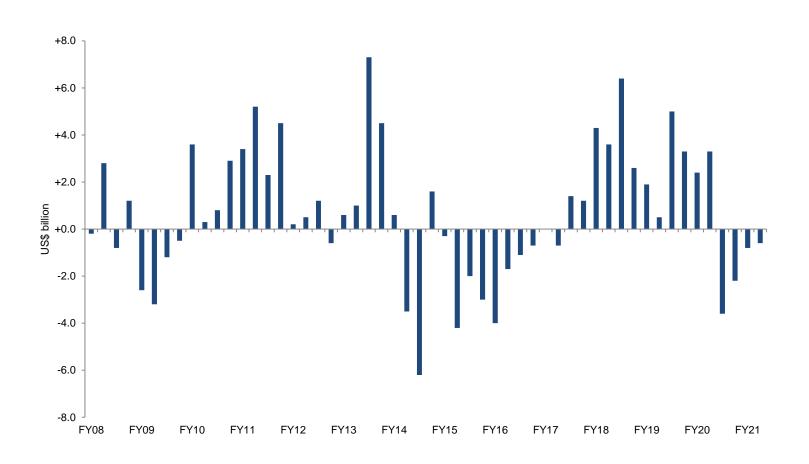
# Appendix 3b Investment themes



	External Debt (USD 19.3bn)	Local Currency (USD 20.6bn)	Corporate Debt (USD 11.6bn)	Equities (USD 6.5bn)	Alternatives (USD 1.3bn)	Overlay/ Liquidity (USD 8.7bn)	
Global Emerging Markets Sub-themes	<ul><li>Broad</li><li>Sovereign</li><li>Sovereign, investment grade</li><li>Short duration</li></ul>	<ul><li>Bonds</li><li>Bonds (Broad)</li><li>FX+</li><li>Investment grade</li><li>Bonds, volatility managed</li></ul>	<ul><li>Broad</li><li>High yield</li><li>Investment grade</li><li>Short duration</li></ul>	EM Active     EM Equity     EM Small cap     EM ESG     EM Frontier	<ul> <li>Private Equity</li> <li>Healthcare</li> <li>Infrastructure</li> <li>Special Situations</li> <li>Distressed Debt</li> <li>Real Estate</li> </ul>	<ul><li> Overlay</li><li> Hedging</li><li> Cash Management</li></ul>	
		Blended Debt (USD 24.7bn)					
		<ul><li>Blended</li><li>Investment grade</li><li>Absolute return</li><li>ESG</li></ul>					
Regional / Country focused Sub-themes	• Indonesia	China     Indonesia	Asia     Latin America	<ul><li> Africa</li><li> Colombia</li><li> India</li><li> Indonesia</li><li> Middle East</li><li> Saudi Arabia</li></ul>	Andean     Middle East (GCC)		
				Asset 0.3bn)			
	• Global						

## Appendix 3c Quarterly net flows







# Appendix 4 AuM movements by theme and fund classification

US\$bn	AuM 30 June 2020	Performance	Gross subscriptions	Gross redemptions	Net flows	AuM 31 December 2020
External debt	17.1	1.9	1.3	(1.0)	0.3	19.3
Local currency	18.7	2.6	1.5	(2.2)	(0.7)	20.6
Corporate debt	10.6	1.8	1.0	(1.8)	(0.8)	11.6
Blended debt	23.3	3.0	1.2	(2.8)	(1.6)	24.7
Equities	4.6	1.6	0.8	(0.5)	0.3	6.5
Alternatives	1.4	-	0.1	(0.2)	(0.1)	1.3
Multi-asset	0.3	-	-	-	-	0.3
Overlay / liquidity	7.6	(0.1)	1.6	(0.4)	1.2	8.7
Total	83.6	10.8	7.5	(8.9)	1.4	93.0

US\$bn	31 December 2020	30 June 2020
Ashmore sponsored funds	21.9	20.8
Segregated accounts	67.4	58.8
White label / other	3.7	4.0
Total	93.0	83.6

# Appendix 5 Foreign exchange

**Ashmore** 

- · Sterling strengthened against the US dollar over the period
  - Period-end rate moved from 1.2356 to 1.3670
  - Average rate 1.3107 vs 1.2657 in H1 2019/20
- P&L FX effects in H1 2020/21:
  - Translation of net management fees -£4.9 million
  - Translation of non-Sterling balance sheet items -£6.1 million
  - Net FX hedges +£8.7 million
  - Unrealised seed capital -£2.4 million

#### FX sensitivity:

- ~£4.0 million PBT for 5c movement in GBP:USD rate
  - £3.0 million for cash deposits (in 'foreign exchange')
  - £1.0 million for seed capital (in 'finance income')

#### Currency exposure of cash(1)

	31 December 2020 £m	%	30 June 2020 £m	%
US dollar	326.2	74	380.5	78
Sterling	73.8	17	66.0	13
Other	41.0	9	43.6	9
Total	441.0		490.1	

(1) Excludes consolidated funds. See Appendix for reconciliation to statutory consolidated cash flow statement

#### **Currency exposure of seed capital**

	31 December 2020 £m	%	30 June 2020 £m	%
US dollar	218.3	86	213.7	90
Colombian peso	14.5	6	13.9	6
Other	21.8	8	10.8	4
Total	254.6		238.4	





£m	As reported	Consolidated funds	Group ex funds
Cash from operations	88.9	(0.3)	89.2
Taxation	(24.0)	-	(24.0)
Interest received	1.4	1.2	0.2
Seeding activities	32.6	(3.3)	35.9
Dividends paid	(86.6)	-	(86.6)
EBT purchases	(23.3)	-	(23.3)
FX and other	(41.2)	(0.7)	(40.5)
Increase/(decrease) in cash	(52.2)	(3.1)	(49.1)
Opening cash & cash equivalents	500.9	10.8	490.1
Closing cash & cash equivalents	448.7	7.7	441.0

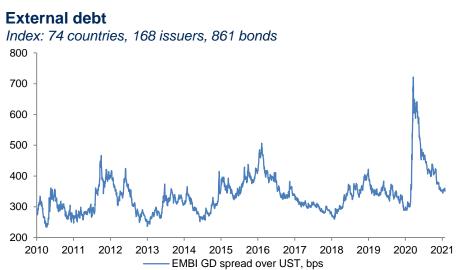
# Appendix 7 Investment performance



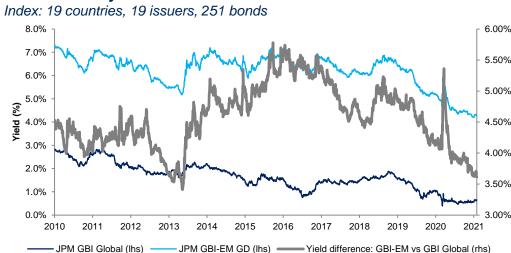
	9m		1yr		3yr		5yr	
31st December 2020	Ashmore	Benchmark	Ashmore	Benchmark	Ashmore	Benchmark	Ashmore	Benchmark
External debt								
Broad	30.6%	21.5%	2.2%	5.3%	3.4%	5.1%	8.2%	7.1%
Sovereign	24.9%	21.5%	1.0%	5.3%	3.7%	5.1%	7.0%	7.1%
Sovereign IG	17.3%	15.2%	9.6%	8.9%	8.1%	7.4%	8.4%	7.7%
Local currency								
Bonds	25.8%	21.1%	3.9%	2.7%	3.2%	3.0%	8.0%	6.7%
Corporate debt								
Broad	29.3%	19.3%	8.4%	7.1%	6.0%	6.9%	7.1%	7.2%
HY	40.2%	26.6%	11.0%	6.6%	6.3%	5.6%	11.7%	8.6%
IG	22.4%	14.4%	10.7%	7.4%	7.9%	6.4%	8.2%	6.2%
Blended debt								
Blended	31.2%	18.8%	3.3%	3.9%	3.2%	3.6%	8.3%	6.2%
Blended IG	21.8%	16.0%	7.3%	6.8%	6.0%	5.7%	7.1%	6.6%
Equities								
All Cap	77.4%	54.8%	31.5%	18.3%	13.3%	6.2%	20.8%	12.8%
Active	55.3%	54.8%	15.5%	18.3%	8.6%	6.2%	-	-
Small Cap	102.7%	73.8%	44.6%	19.3%	10.3%	2.7%	13.1%	8.2%
Frontier markets	36.0%	37.1%	-2.8%	-1.5%	-2.3%	-1.0%	6.6%	5.6%

# Appendix 8 Historical valuations relative to Developed Markets



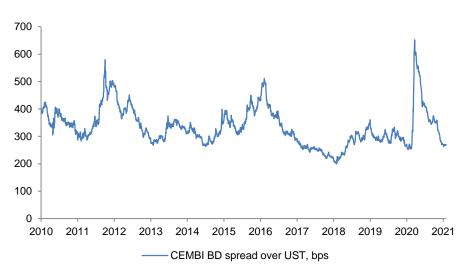


#### **Local currency**

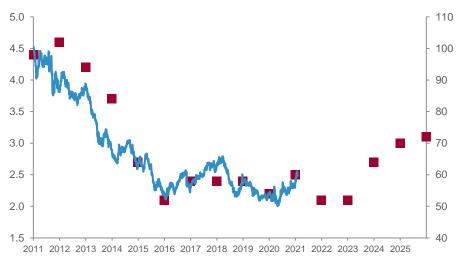


#### **Corporate debt**

Index: 58 countries, 719 issuers, 1,752 bonds



#### **Equities**



# Appendix 9 Disclosures



#### Page 4:

- Gross performance is shown, weighted by fund AuM, to provide a representative view to analysts and shareholders of Ashmore's investment performance over relevant time periods
- Only funds at 31 December 2020 and with a performance benchmark are included, which specifically excludes funds in the alternatives and overlay/liquidity investment themes
- 86% of Group AuM at 31 December 2020 is in such funds with a one year track record; 77% with three years; and 66% with five years
- Reporting of investment performance to existing and prospective fund investors is specific to the fund and the investor's circumstances and objectives and may, for example, include net as well as gross performance

#### Appendix 7:

Source: Ashmore (un-audited), JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley

- Returns gross of fees, dividends reinvested.
- Annualised performance shown for periods greater than one year.
- Within each investment theme category, all relevant Ashmore Group managed funds globally that have a benchmark reference point have been included.

#### **Benchmarks**

External debt Broad

External debt Sovereign

External debt Sovereign IG

Local currency Bonds

JPM EMBI GD

JPM EMBI GD IG

JPM EMBI GD IG

JPM GBI-EM GD

Blended debt 50% EMBI GD, 25% GBI-EM GD, 25% ELMI+

Blended debt IG 50% EMBI GD IG, 25% GBI-EM GD IG, 25% ELMI+ IG

Corporate debt Broad

Corporate debt HY

JPM CEMBI BD NIG

Corporate debt IG

JPM CEMBI BD NIG

Active equity

MSCI EM net

All cap equity

MSCI EM net

Small cap equity MSCI EM Small Cap net

Frontier markets equity MSCI Frontier net

#### Disclaimer



#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This document does not constitute an offer to sell or an invitation to buy shares in Ashmore Group plc or any other invitation or inducement to engage in investment activities. Certain statements, beliefs and opinions in this document are forward-looking, which reflect the Company's current expectations and projections about future events. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve a number of risks, uncertainties and assumptions that could cause actual results or events to differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements.

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